

Asheville Greenway Master Plan Addendum – November 2003
Prepared and Approved by the Greenway Commission

INTRODUCTION

Five years have passed since the Greenway Master Plan was adopted in 1998. Many of the Plan's recommendations have been realized and much progress has been made in developing the greenway system. This update provides a summary of the activities and accomplishments of this five-year period and describes recommended additions or changes to the maps and plan based on experience and new opportunities.

The following section summarizes the accomplishments and progress that have been made over the past five years, since the Greenway Master Plan was adopted. After this section, the Update is organized into sections which follow the order of the chapters in the Master Plan. The section names correspond with the chapter names.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (see Greenway Master Plan, pp. 133-144)

Greenway Commission and Parks and Greenways Foundation Established

The Asheville Greenway Commission was established in 1999. It is an advisory board of seven citizen volunteers. Citizens are appointed by City Council to serve three-year terms. The Commission works closely with Parks and Recreation Department staff and assists with community outreach, fundraising, recruiting volunteers, acquisition of easements and planning greenway sections. The Commission meets monthly with staff to plan and coordinate activities.

The Asheville Parks and Greenways Foundation was established in 2000 as a non-profit organization, separate from the City, to raise funds for parks and greenways. The Foundation hired a part-time director in 2003 to establish memberships and individual giving, and produced a brochure promoting greenways.

Greenway Development

1. Land Protection Accomplishments

Land has been protected, through City ownership or easements, for most or all of these greenway corridors: Reed Creek; central portion of the French Broad River Greenway, Clingman Forest; Glenn Creek; and Nasty Branch.

2. Corridor Master Planning Accomplishments

Master Plans have been developed for a number of individual greenways and sections of greenways. Master Plans are now complete for the French Broad River Park, Reed Creek Greenway, Clingman Forest Greenway, Azalea Park, and the Riverbend development along the Swannanoa River.

3. Construction Accomplishments

Almost five miles of greenway have been built since greenway construction began in 1988. The French Broad River Park has two miles of greenways, Glenn Creek is complete (.85 mile), and Richmond Hill Park has two miles of trails. Reed Creek Greenway (.85 miles) is in the process of being cleared and prepared for construction, with completion planned in 2005.

The greenways were built very economically, with an average cost per mile of \$100,000 (compare this to \$300,000/mile for sidewalks). They have also been inexpensive to maintain, with average annual maintenance costs per mile of \$7,000.

4. Fundraising Accomplishments

- City of Asheville funding to date: \$95,000
- Outside funding to date: \$388,000
- Total land value donated: \$450,000

Community Outreach and Support

A PowerPoint presentation was created in late 2001 and updated in 2003 that outlines the benefits of greenways, the history of greenways in Asheville, duties of the Greenway Commission and how people can get involved in greenway planning and development. The presentation was given to six community groups in 2002 and to seven groups in 2003.

The Greenway Commission has helped organize and participate in neighborhood meetings related to the Reed Creek and Clingman Forest Greenways and has met with residents of Sweeten Creek Road neighborhoods to discuss greenway plans and needs along Sweeten Creek Road. The Commission works with a number of ad-hoc groups who have formed to promote and help plan and build greenways in their neighborhoods. Ad-hoc groups have formed around the Reed Creek, Haw Creek, Clingman Forest, Sweeten Creek and Rhododendron Greenways.

An Asheville Greenways brochure was produced in 2001. Several thousand copies have been distributed. Donations totaling \$1,500 from the NC John Muir Foundation, G.K. McClure Education and Development Fund, Asheville Sports/Ski Country Sports, Blue Ridge Bicycle Club and Liberty Bicycles paid for printing the brochures.

SYSTEM RECOMMENDATIONS (pp. 49-69 in Master Plan)

This update documents activities or changes to the primary and secondary greenway corridors set forth in the Master Plan and also proposes some additional corridors to be included in the Asheville Greenway System. The primary greenway corridors are noted with a letter in the text and on the map. These letters are also used here to refer to the greenway corridors.

- A. Hominy Creek.** Plans are underway to build the section of this greenway between French Broad River Park and Hominy Creek Park. NCDOT has awarded \$300,000 to the

City for this project (Project E-3608 on the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)). Property owners have been notified and the City is currently pursuing easements from property owners.

- B. Brevard Road.** The northern section of Brevard Road, from I-40 south to I-26 is scheduled for road improvements that will include widening from two to four lanes, medians, sidewalks along one side and wide outside lanes to accommodate bicyclists (TIP project U-3601; construction scheduled to begin in Federal Fiscal Year '05). The Greenway Commission, along with other bicycle and pedestrian advocates, lobbied for these design features that will also improve safety and aesthetics along this section.
- D. Haywood Road.** A corridor study was completed in 1999 and many of the recommendations are planned to be implemented in 2004. The planned improvements to the on-road portion of this greenway corridor (between Beecham's curve and Sulphur Springs Road) include re-striping for crosswalks, on-street parking, turning restrictions and for safer bicycle travel.
- G. Beaverdam Creek.** The developers of the Wild Cherry Development along Beaverdam Creek Road and Wild Cherry Road plan to donate an easement along the creek and to build a greenway along it according to City specifications. They are urging neighboring landowners to support and contribute towards the proposed greenway along this corridor.
- K. Emma Road Stream.** A sidewalk along North Louisiana Road is desperately needed, and should be constructed prior to developing a greenway along the Emma Road Stream. Children walking to the Emma Elementary School from the nearby neighborhoods are forced to walk on the side of a narrow windy road. In addition, the Emma community is not far from the Richmond Hill Park and its greenway, which will provide much-needed recreational facilities.
- L. Nasty Branch.** Greenway Commission members studied this greenway in 2002 and 2003. Because there are many sidewalks and parks in the area adjacent to Nasty Branch, construction of a greenway did not seem to be a high priority. (see the Action Plan for priorities given for all greenways).
- N. Reed Creek/Broadway.** Plans for Reed Creek Greenway were dramatically expanded in 2003 to include efforts to improve water quality, initiate ecological restoration, and provide educational opportunities. The City has acquired all the property necessary to build the approximately one-mile long greenway off-road on the southwest side of Broadway paralleling Reed Creek, beginning at Chestnut Street and ending at Catawba Street, near the Glenn Creek Greenway and the Botanical Gardens of Asheville. To the extent possible and pending availability of funding, the City plans to coordinate initial construction efforts with the Metropolitan Sewer District's upcoming replacement of sewer lines along Reed Creek, scheduled for summer 2004. Grant applications have been submitted to fund portions of the water quality improvement plans throughout the phase one area, and water features can be added in phases as funding becomes available. The Asheville Parks and Greenways Foundation plans to focus on fundraising among the residents of the nearby Montford and Mount Clare neighborhoods. The Greenway Commission will encourage an extension from Catawba to the Glenn Creek Greenway.

Neighborhood Greenway Connectors and other greenways in city parks. Some details are provided below for a few of the neighborhood connectors listed on page 69. In addition, greenways are planned and recommended for city parks, as noted below. Priorities for neighborhood greenways are driven primarily by neighborhood interest and commitment, NCDOT road improvement plans and available funding.

- **Rhododendron Creek Greenway** (listed as “Along an unnamed stream corridor between Hominy Creek and Haywood Avenue”). Beginning off Sand Hill Road opposite Pinewood Place, a greenway will extend along the west side of Rhododendron Creek to the West Asheville Park, where a bridge will cross to the east side of the creek. Both pedestrian and bicycle traffic can then travel along Talmadge Street to its end, where a greenway will cross the city land at the former North Carolina National Guard armory and connect to the Hominy Creek Greenway or along Hominy Creek Road to the Hominy Creek Park and the French Broad River Greenway.
- **Clingman Forest Greenway** (listed as “Along Clingman Avenue...”). A Master Plan has been completed for the Clingman Forest portion of this greenway. This is a 1.4 mile off-road section that runs between Clingman Road and South French Broad Road. The non-profit organization, Mountain Housing Opportunities, has been leading this planning effort.
- **Sweeten Creek Greenway.** Residents from Ballantree and other neighborhoods along Sweeten Creek Road approached the Greenway Commission in 2003 to express their interest in and support of on- and off-road greenway development along Sweeten Creek Road and Sweeten Creek, with connections into some of the neighborhoods. NCDOT is currently widening the northern portion of Sweeten Creek Road and has plans to widen the southern portion of the road (TIP project U-2801). It is important for the Greenway Commission and the neighborhoods to work with NCDOT as it designs and constructs this project to ensure that safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities are built.
- **Azalea Park.** Several miles of greenways are planned to be included in Azalea Park. The park’s greenways will connect to the Swannanoa River greenway and to the Mountains-to-Sea Trail.
- **Richmond Hill Park.** Two miles of greenway trails have been built in this park. Plans approved by City Council in 2003 will change the location and amount of greenway trails because of the National Guard Amory relocation, construction of ball fields, and relocation of the disc golf course.

It should also be noted that some developers have built or are developing greenways within new neighborhoods. The Greenway Commission encourages this type of development. However, these greenways have not been described in the Master Plan and have not been “counted” in the table below. Examples of these are Biltmore Park, where approximately two miles of greenways have been built, and the proposed Wild Cherry development on Beaverdam Road, where greenways have been incorporated into the subdivision plan.

Map Notes

Sweeten Creek greenway should be extended along 25A (Sweeten Creek Road) to Airport Road (NC280).

Funding Sources (pp. 125-132 in Master Plan)

For the greenways that have been completed to date, the City of Asheville has provided \$95,000 in funding and the remaining \$388,000 has been raised from grants from local, state and national organizations. The following organizations have provided funding for the greenway segments that have been completed:

- City of Asheville (\$95,000)
- National Trails Program (\$30,000)
- NC Dept. of Water Resources (\$50,000)
- NC Dept. of Transportation (\$225,000)
- Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (\$30,000)
- Pigeon River Fund (\$13,000)
- Recreation Trails Program (\$40,000)

Volunteer labor has helped clear and build some of the greenway corridors and is an important resource, especially in tough economic times.

Although more funds are needed to accomplish the acquisition, planning, building and maintenance goals set forth in the Plan's Action Plan, a substantial amount of funds have been secured for greenways which will be developed in the next five years:

- City of Asheville (\$302,750) – includes some in-kind funding
- NC Dept. of Transportation (\$700,000)
- Pigeon River Fund (\$21,940)
- Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (\$25,000)

The following tables detail the funding and other details for the greenways that have been developed and the ones that are in the process of being developed.

Summary of Completed Greenway Sections

French Broad River Park- Phase I

Length -	.19 miles – year completed: 1994
Trail Surface -	asphalt
Cost -	\$15,000
Funding Source –	City of Asheville (\$15,000) – year received: 1992
Maintenance Cost -	\$4,000 per year
Injuries/incident reports -	None
Land value-	\$34,500 (donated)

French Broad River Park- Phase II

Length -	.34 miles – year completed: 1996
Trail Surface -	asphalt
Cost -	\$20,000
Funding Source –	NC Dept. of Water Resources (\$20,000)– year received: 1995
Maintenance Cost -	\$5,000 per year
Injuries/incident reports-	None

Land value-	\$62,000 (donated)
French Broad River Park- Phase III (Amboy Road)	
Length -	.35 miles – year completed: 1998
Trail Surface -	asphalt
Cost -	\$60,000
Funding Source –	NC Dept. of Water Resources (\$30,000)– year received: 1997 National Trails Program (\$30,000) – year received: 1997
Maintenance Cost -	\$4,400 per year
Injuries/incident reports-	None
Land value -	\$63,500 (donated)

French Broad River Park- Phase IV	
Length -	.8 mile – year completed: 2002
Trail Surface -	asphalt
Cost -	\$70,000
Funding Source –	Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (\$30,000) – year received: 2000, Recreation Trails Program (\$40,000) – year received: 2000
Maintenance Cost -	\$4,200 per year
Injuries/incident reports-	None
Land value -	\$150,500 (donated)
Length –	.3 mile
Trail Surface –	wood chip mulch and asphalt
Cost -	\$13,000
Funding Source -	Pigeon River Fund (\$13,000) – year received: 2000
Maintenance Cost –	\$2,000
Injuries/incident reports -	none
Land value-	\$57,000 (donated)

Glenn Creek- Phase I	
Length -	.5 mile – year completed: 1997
Trail Surface -	asphalt
Cost -	\$80,000
Funding Source -	City of Asheville (\$80,000)– year received: 1996
Maintenance Cost-	\$5,000 per year
Injuries/incident reports-	None
Land value-	\$50,500 (donated)
Glenn Creek – Phase II	
Length -	.35 – year completed: 2002
Trail Surface -	asphalt
Cost -	\$225,000
Funding Source –	NC Dept. of Transportation (\$225,000)– year received: 1999
Maintenance Cost -	\$4,000 per year
Injuries/incident reports-	None
Land value-	\$85,000 (donated)

Richmond Hill Park	
Length -	2 miles – year completed: 2001

Trail Surface-	earth
Cost -	\$0
Funding Source -	Volunteer labor
Maintenance Cost -	\$5,000
Injuries/incident reports-	none
Land value -	\$22,000 (donated)

Total Greenway Development (through September 2003)

Length –	4.83 miles
Average Cost per mile -	\$100,000
Average Annual Maintenance Costs per mile -	\$7,000
City of Asheville Funding to Date -	\$95,000
Outside Funding to Date -	\$388,000
Total Land Value (entirely donated) -	\$450,000

Greenway Development in Progress

Reed Creek Greenway

Length -	.85
Proposed Surface –	asphalt
Funding Source –	Pigeon River Fund (\$21,940) – received 2001 (all for cleanup); City of Asheville (\$226,990) – received 1998
Spent to Date –	\$180,843 (\$158,903 spent on land)
Future Costs –	TBA
Land Value-	\$79,000 (donated)

French Broad River Greenway Corridor Connectors - TEA21

Length -	.57 mile
Proposed Surface –	asphalt
Funding Source –	NC Dept. of Transportation (\$203,040) – year received: 2001; City of Asheville (cash/in-kind \$50,760) – year received: 2001
Spent to Date -	0
Future Costs -	\$253,000

French Broad River Park- Phase IV (phase 2)

Length -	.6
Proposed Surface –	asphalt and mulch
Funding Source –	Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (\$25,000) – year received 2003; City of Asheville (\$25,000) – year received 2003
Spent to Date -	0
Future Costs -	0

French Broad River Greenway Corridor – Hominy Creek Park Segment

Length –	TBA
Proposed Surface –	TBA
Funding Source –	Dept. of Transportation (\$300,000) – year received 2003
Spent to Date –	0
Future Cost -	TBA

Clingman Forest	
Length -	1.4
Proposed Surface -	asphalt
Spent to Date -	0 (Mountain Housing Opportunities raised funds for the Master Plan)
Future Costs -	\$1,200,000 (estimated cost)

Azalea Park- Phase I	
Length -	TBA (several miles)
Proposed Surface -	TBA
Funding Source -	Dept. of Transportation (\$400,000) – year received 2003
Spent to Date -	0
Future Costs -	TBA

Swannanoa Greenway- WalMart Site/Riverbend Marketplace	
Length -	TBA
Area -	13.9 acres of park and greenway
Proposed Surface -	Asphalt
Spent to Date -	0
Future Costs -	Note – to be paid for by developers and donated to City

ACTION PLAN (pp. 133-144 in Master Plan)

- Development Phase Key:**
1. Land Protection
 2. Corridor Master Plan
 3. Design Development
 4. Construction / Development

Greenway Segment (listed in alphabetical order)	2004-06 (3 yrs)	2007-10 (4 yrs)	2011-15 (5 yrs)
Ashland Ave/McDowell St. – on-road (Patton Ave to Swannanoa)		1, 2	3, 4
Azalea Park Greenway	3,4		
Beaverdam Road (Woodfin to the East)		1	2, 3, 4
Brevard Road (Hominy Creek Greenway to I-26)	1,2,3,4		
Brevard Road (I-26 to the Blue Ridge Parkway)			1
Chestnut Road to French Broad River (on-road)			1, 2
Clingman Forest	3, 4		
French Broad River (Webb Park north to Broadway area; work with NCDOT Re: I-26 Connector Area)	1	2, 3, 4	
French Broad River (Amboy Road to Hominy Creek)	1, 2, 3	4	
Glenn Creek Extension to Kimberly Ave	1	2, 3, 4	
Haw Creek (including link to Swannanoa)	1	2, 3, 4	
Haywood Road (including link with Clingman Forest)	1, 2, 3	4	
Hendersonville Road			1
Hominy Creek (From French Broad River to Rhododendron Creek)	1, 2	3, 4	
Hominy Creek (Rhododendron to the west)			1, 2

Greenway Segment (listed in alphabetical order)	2004-06 (3 yrs)	2007-10 (4 yrs)	2011-15 (5 yrs)
Nasty Branch (including segment into Kenilworth)			1
Reed Creek	4		
Reed Creek Extension to French Broad River		1, 2, 3, 4	
Rhododendron Creek	1, 2	3, 4	
Richmond Hill (internal trail system)	3, 4		
Swannanoa River (Azalea Park to Riverbend)	1	2,3	4
Swannanoa River (Riverbend to French Broad River)		1, 2	3, 4
Sweeten Creek	1	2	3,4

Other notes and recommendations

The Greenway Commission and City Planning Department should advocate for the provision of greenways in subdivision plans and for greenways to be considered as equivalent to sidewalks in these plans, so that greenways and/or sidewalks will be developed in all new subdivisions. Where terrain or other natural features preclude the development of greenways/sidewalks, the “fee in lieu of” sidewalks that is collected in the development process should go towards future sidewalks and greenways.

The Greenway Commission and Parks and Recreation Department staff need to be involved with NCDOT staff for road widening and new road projects, to ensure safe walking and bicycling facilities are included in these projects.

This update was prepared by Greenway Commission members and Parks and Recreation Department staff in the summer and fall of 2003.

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